

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of disabling at least a portion of at least one
2 personal electronic device on board a vehicle, comprising:
3 sending a radio frequency (RF) signal from a transmitter on
4 the vehicle;
5 receiving the RF signal by a receiver of the at least one
6 personal electronic device; and
7 interpreting the RF signal in a manner causing at least a
8 portion of the at least one personal electronic device to be disabled.

- 1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein sending the radio frequency
2 signal is carried out more than once during a use of the vehicle.

- 1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the receiver is a Bluetooth
2 receiver.

- 1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the receiver is a cellular
2 phone receiver.

- 1 5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 encrypting the RF signal sent by the transmitter on the
3 airplane.

- 1 6. The method of claim 5, further comprising:
2 decrypting the RF signal by the at least one personal
3 electronic device.

- 1 7. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 providing an announcement relating to the disabling of
3 personal electronic devices.

1 8. The method of claim 1, wherein sending the radio frequency is
2 continued throughout the duration of a period in which the personal electronic
3 devices are to remain at least partially disabled.

1 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one personal
2 electronic device includes a handheld computer including an RF receiver.

1 10. A system for at least partially disabling personal electronic
2 devices within a specified area, comprising:

3 a transmitter configured to send a radio frequency (RF)
4 signal, the transmitter located within the specified area;
5 a receiver configured to receive the RF signal, the receiver
6 being coupled to the personal electronic device;
7 program logic configured to disable at least a portion of the
8 personal electronic device in response to the RF signal.

1 11. The system of claim 10, further comprising:
2 an audio system configured to broadcast an audio warning
3 relating to the automatic disablement of the personal electronic devices.

1 12. The method of claim 10, further comprising:
2 an encryption logic for encrypting the RF signal.

1 13. The method of claim 10, further comprising:
2 a decryption logic configured for decoding the RF signal.

1 14. The method of claim 10, wherein the receiver includes a
2 Bluetooth receiver.

1 15. The method of claim 10, wherein the receiver includes a
2 cellular phone receiver.

1 16. The method of claim 10, wherein at least one of the personal
2 electronic devices is a handheld computer.

1 17. The method of claim 10, wherein at least one of the personal
2 electronic devices is a cellular telephone.

1 18. The method of claim 10, wherein at least one of the personal
2 electronic devices is a text messaging device.

1 19. The method of claim 10, wherein at least one of the personal
2 electronic devices is a laptop computer.

1 20. A method of preparing an airplane for takeoff, the method
2 comprising:

3 3 providing a warning message to passengers relating to the
4 disablement of personal electronic devices on board the airplane;

5 5 transmitting a radio frequency (RF) signal configured to be
6 received by RF receivers of the personal electronic devices on board the
7 airplane and configured to cause at least partial disablement of the
8 personal electronic devices.

1 21. The method of claim 20, wherein transmitting the RF signal
2 is carried out more than once.

1 22. The method of claim 20, wherein at least one of the RF
2 receivers is a Bluetooth receiver.

1 23. The method of claim 20, wherein at least one of the
2 receivers is a cellular phone receiver.

1 24. The method of claim 20, further comprising:
2 2 encrypting the RF signal.

1 25. The method of claim 20, further comprising:
2 decrypting the RF signal by the at least one personal
3 electronic device.

1 26. The method of claim 20, wherein transmitting the RF signal
2 is continued throughout the duration of a period in which the personal
3 electronic devices are to remain at least partially disabled.

1 27. The method of claim 20, wherein at least one of the personal
2 electronic devices includes a handheld computer including an RF receiver.

1 28. A method of preparing an area for a specific use, comprising:
2 providing a warning message to persons in the area relating
3 to the disablement of personal electronic devices in and near the area;
4 transmitting a radio frequency (RF) signal configured to be
5 received by RF receivers of the personal electronic devices in and near the
6 area and configured to cause at least partial disablement of the personal
7 electronic devices.

1 29. The method of claim 28, wherein transmitting the RF signal
2 is carried out more than once.

1 30. The method of claim 28, wherein at least one of the RF
2 receivers is a Bluetooth receiver.

1 31. The method of claim 28, wherein at least one of the
2 receivers is a cellular phone receiver.

1 32. The method of 28, further comprising:
2 encrypting the RF signal.

1 33. The method of claim 28, further comprising:
2 decrypting the RF signal by the at least one personal
3 electronic device.

1 34. The method of claim 28, wherein transmitting the RF signal
2 is continued throughout the duration of a period in which the personal
3 electronic devices are to remain at least partially disabled.

1 35. The method of claim 28, wherein at least one of the personal
2 electronic devices includes a handheld computer including an RF receiver.